

# STRANGER THINGS

## **Silent Night** by missClaraOswinOswald

**Category:** Stranger Things, 2016

**Genre:** Family, Hurt-Comfort

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Eleven/Jane H., J. Hopper, Joyce B., Mike W.

**Pairings:** Eleven/Jane H./Mike W., Joyce B./J. Hopper

**Status:** Completed

**Published:** 2017-01-03 14:38:05

**Updated:** 2017-01-03 14:38:05

**Packaged:** 2019-12-17 14:57:22

**Rating:** T

**Chapters:** 1

**Words:** 1,076

**Publisher:** [www.fanfiction.net](http://www.fanfiction.net)

**Summary:** Eleven is stuck in the Upside Down, but manages to get out and celebrates Christmas with the Wheeler family. Written for the '9 Days Christmas Writing Challenge 2016'.

## Silent Night

**A/N: Originally, this was a whole Upside Down- discovery post-season 1 ficlet, but why shouldn't I write a post-s1 fic and a Christmas fic at the same time? This fic was originally written for the 9 Days Christmas Writing Challenge, but I finished writing it a little later.**

### **SILENT NIGHT**

The world was dark and green when she first looked around. She did not know how long she had been out, hours, days maybe? The woods around her were unfamiliar, she then knew for sure she was not home. Far from home, far from Mike. She stood up, only now noticing her wet clothing. She shivered. She was in the Upside Down again, the real Upside Down, not the mental void where she'd been countless times before during the experiments. The Demogorgon was dead, she was absolutely sure of that, she had used up all her powers to kill the creature. Where had the gates gone? Probably not. Eleven shivered again and started walking.

She walked for days, but every time she thought she saw something or someone, they were gone. She did find a box, in the middle of the woods, that had fresh Eggos in it. Somehow there were new ones every day, along with some other food.

Shelter wasn't much of a problem; she slept at Mike's house, in what was left of his bedroom. Somehow, it felt safer than sleeping in a random house. She was sure weeks had passed now, at this time. The hunt for gates didn't go as smoothly as she originally thought. She couldn't open a portal. Loneliness wasn't something new to Eleven, although it hit harder now she had experienced true warmth and love, instead of the cold of her Papa.

Today, she was on a mission. She had packed a backpack for today, filled with food. She'd taken some of Nancy's clothes from the wardrobe to keep herself warm. The Upside Down was cold, after all.

Today she would be opening the gate at the Hawkins lab.

The hike to the lab wasn't a long one, but Eleven was tense when she was walking outside in the Upside Down. There was that omnipresent

eerie feeling in her stomach again. She knew what she had to do. She had to go back in that water tank again, reach out to the normal world, and create enough energy to zap herself back. That was the easy part. The hard part was closing the gate, especially since she didn't want any kind of creature that was still hanging around in the Upside Down joining her on her trip back home.

She put the helmet on and lowered herself in the tank. She focused on opening the gate, she could feel the Other World. There was a bright light, and she was back in Will's living room.

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Joyce was in the kitchen when she heard a noise coming from the living room. "Will, is that you, darling?"

She walked over, dropped her glass of water when she saw the unconscious girl lying on her living room floor. "Eleven?" Joyce hurried to the girl, tried to wake her up. Eleven opened her eyes.

"Hello, sweetheart," Joyce said, holding the girl, "Welcome back."

Eleven smiled. "Home."

"Yes, home," Joyce repeated.

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"Will! Lucas! Dustin!" Mike almost screamed over the walkie-talkie, "Mike here. Over."

"This is Dustin, what's going on? Over."

"Okay, this is the best thing ever. Eleven's back! She's at Will's house, his mum found her. I'm going there now! Over!" Mike put his walkie-talkie down and hurried to his bike.

He couldn't wait to see Eleven again. It had been three months since she'd sacrificed herself.

When Mike arrived at Will's place, Hopper was already there. Mike knocked, Joyce opened the door immediately.

"Mike, hi," she said, "Come in. We were expecting you."

Eleven sat on the couch, dirty and covered in a big blanket. "Mike," she said weakly.

Mike smiled broadly. "Hey, El." He walked over to her and hugged her enthusiastically. "You've been gone way too long."

"Upside Down."

Mike nodded. "I know. There's no way to thank you enough for your sacrifice."

"Friends," she answered.

"The others will be here soon, they are all very excited to see you," Mike chatted, "They all want to thank you."

Eleven nodded. "Dirty."

"El, do you want to take a shower?" Joyce asked.

Eleven nodded and walked with Joyce to the bathroom. Hopper sat next to Jonathan on the couch, a cigarette in his hand. "Clearly a Christmas miracle."

A clean Eleven returned to the living room fifteen minutes later, wearing a clean set of clothing. Joyce had bought some clothing for her if she ever returned. Joyce, Mike, and Will had moved in with Hopper a couple of weeks after Mike's return. Their old house was basically breaking down at that point after the Demogorgon attacks.

"Tree?" Eleven pointed at the decorated Christmas tree in the corner of the room.

"It's a Christmas Tree," Mike said.

"What is 'Christmas'?" Eleven asked.

"We celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ," Joyce explained, "The son of God. He was a very special human and means a lot to many people."

"I understand," Eleven said.

"You're definitely going to spend Christmas with us!" Mike said excitedly.

Eleven smiled. "Family."

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The Christmas tree was fully decorated at the Wheeler's house. Nancy sat on the couch with Jonathan, holding hands and whispering. Little Holly was playing with a doll, Karen and Ted were busy cooking Christmas dinner in the kitchen. El and Mike were downstairs, playing chess.

"I won!" Eleven said happily.

"You did," Mike was even happier than she was. He admired her. Her hair had grown longer in the past months, Joyce helped her to curl it. She wore a stunning blue dress, a color Mike really liked on her.

"I like that dress," Mike told her, stood up and grabbed a wrapped package, "I got you something."

Eleven looked really surprised. She accepted the gift and opened the wrapping paper. It was a silver necklace, with the number '11' as a pendant.

"Thank you," Eleven said deeply touched, "Put it on?"

Mike put the necklace on. "You look really pretty."

"Pretty is good," Eleven said. She kissed his cheek. "Merry Christmas, Mike."